

Army of Evil

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Summary: Simba struggles to finally tell Nala how he feels, while a mighty invasion force gets ready to march...

Chapter 1: Chapter 1: The Perfect Day

AN: Strap yourself in, kids! It's gonna be a bumpy ride! You know why? Because the series is coming to an end! It's time for the big, scary, ultimate climax! So hurry, hurry, hurry and read, before you explode from the excitement!

Army of Evil

Chapter One: The Perfect Day

"Okay, okay," said Simba as he paced back and forth around the den in the morning, his face showing nothing but a combination of nervousness and fear. "This is going to be easy. Come on, you can do this!"

Simba was trying to gain some courage – courage that he hoped would allow him to let out a secret to a certain someone who he had admired for quite some time. The night before he thought he sounded pretty confident, but now things were becoming very worrying for the young cub very quickly.

Sometimes he wondered whether he was just being stupid. To everyone else it seemed pretty obvious that he could do this easily, without fear of anything bad happening.

But that was them, and this was *him*. Other people may think it was easy, but Simba didn't. This was something he and he alone had to do. He'd had enough advice from enough people over the past few weeks, and it was about time he used that advice to his advantage.

She likes you back, Simba told himself. *You gotta remember that. Everyone else thinks so – so it must be true! Has she told someone? She must have told someone if everyone seems to know. Everyone except for me. Why would she tell everyone else, but not me?*

Questions in his mind. He absolutely *despised* them. They had no obvious answers, so what was the point of even asking yourself them? It's like when you walk into a room, and then you forget why you walked in there. And then you ask yourself, "Why did I walk into this room?"

Why would you ask yourself? You don't know.

He'd never get an answer unless he summed up the courage to tell his best friend how he felt about her. So he liked her more than a friend – a *lot* more. The trouble was that the task of telling her was far harder than he had ever imagined. There was always this feeling in the back of his mind that she would reject him immediately.

But then again, she usually loved nothing more than getting as close to him as she possibly could. Hugging, cuddling, you name it – Nala had done it to him, more times than he could possibly count.

Well, there was a positive way of thinking about it. She spent a lot of time around him, so didn't that mean something? Did it mean that perhaps she thought of him the same way as he did about her? Maybe, just maybe...

Of course, it could just be because of her loneliness. Simba was her first – and as of now, *only* – friend. Was she that lonely that she wanted to hold on to him for as long as she possibly could?

Thinking about all these different possibilities just made Simba's head ache, and it also made him worry more. None of these possibilities were helping at all! They just led to doubt, more and more doubt!

Simba stopped and took a deep breath. "I'm thinking about this too much," he told himself, trying his best to calm down. "Don't worry – it'll be perfect. I'll watch the sunset with her, get as close as I can and tell her *exactly* how I feel. It'll be easy!"

"What'll be easy?" asked a voice from across the den.

The voice belonged to Simba's mother, Sarabi. She had a smile on her face – a smile she always used when she knew Simba had romantic thoughts on his mind. Normally his mother talking to him about things like that would just make him feel very embarrassed, but on an important day like this he could use a little bit of motherly advice.

"You know what I'm talking about, Mom," replied Simba. He knew his mother never *really* needed to ask that question, because she already knew what the answer would be.

Sarabi's smile seemed to widen. "Let me guess – you're thinking about how *pretty* Nala is."

His mother dragged out the word 'pretty', causing Simba to blush behind his fur. Why did all Moms seem to talk like that whenever it involved one of their cubs having a crush on another? They seemed to delight so much in teasing their sons and daughters to no end. Maybe it was some kind of tradition, passed on from one generation to another? Simba wondered if he would do the same when he was going to have cubs of his own... Well, *if* he was going to have cubs of his own. His future seemed pretty uncertain at the moment.

"Actually, I'm thinking about how to tell her," Simba informed Sarabi. "I was thinking of the whole 'telling her while watching the sunset' idea."

"It worked for me," his mother said, wonderful memories returning to her. Memories of when she and Mufasa had a crush on each other when *they* were cubs. Mufasa was just as scared as Simba was right now... Well, Sarabi always thought Mufasa seemed a little *more* scared than Simba was. But that was because on the inside Mufasa was just a big old softie.

"Exactly!" Simba exclaimed, pointing at her. "So that means it'll work for me!" After a few seconds of silence, he added, "Right?"

"Maybe," Sarabi answered finally, delighting in teasing her son. She had to put up with all the teasing from *her* mother when she was younger, so Simba would have to put up with the teasing from *her*. It was like a tradition of sorts. A tradition she was sure Simba would continue when he came to have cubs of his own. That was something she *knew* would happen. After all, mother knows best.

"It *has* to work!" Simba insisted. "Otherwise, what else am I gonna do?"

Sarabi chuckled. "Simba, I'm only teasing you. It'll work perfectly. There's nothing a girl loves more than the sunset. Well, except for her *boyfriend*."

"Mom!" Simba groaned. Moms could be so awkward, sometimes! "You really gotta stop doing that!"

His mother chuckled again. "Hey, I had to deal with it from my mother, too, you know. She kept doing it for a long time after I got together with your father. Right up until..." She sighed, as if she was remembering something tragic and sad. "Well, you understand what I mean."

Simba raised an eyebrow at that. He *didn't* actually understand what she meant. It was most likely something to do with Sarabi's mother, and Simba's grandmother, who he never actually knew. She must have died long ago...

"Mom, what *do* you mean?" Simba asked, curious.

Sarabi sighed again, finding the memories to be actually painful. "It's nothing, Simba. I was just thinking about my mother. It wasn't that long before you were born that she was taken from us."

Simba didn't expect that. So his grandmother wasn't that long gone? "What happened to her?" he asked daringly.

"She left the pride one day, and... she never returned. It was only a few days we had to look before we found her..." She closed her eyes, blocking out tears. "She, she was gone." That was all Sarabi said. The cruel, untimely death of her mother wasn't something she liked to talk about. She did her best to block it out, because she just couldn't bear the memories.

"Oh," was all Simba could say. He wasn't exactly an expert on what to say at times like this, so that would have to do.

Sarabi opened her eyes after a few awkward seconds, a smile returning to her face. "You'd better go see Nala," she told him. "I'm sure she'll be pleased to see you."

Simba grinned back at her, and quickly ran out of the den. Chances were that Nala was by the water hole, and Simba was going to spend as much time as he could with her. Then, tonight, he was finally going to spill his big secret. And he hoped that it would end well for him, rather than in tears.

He *hoped*.

Chapter 2: Chapter 2: The Last Resort

Chapter Two: The Last Resort

Hago was at his wit's end. Things were becoming increasingly desperate for him, and this was causing *big* problems.

What had it been now? His fifth, sixth failure? Was he doomed to spend the rest of his life like this, careening from one failure to the next? This simply couldn't go on! If this kept happening, then Hago knew there was no chance of him enslaving the whole of the Pride Lands, something he had strived to do for more years than he particularly cared to remember.

Hago winced when he saw his brother, Bora, returning to their usual spot in the Outlands – a gloomy, dusty open area – having returned from his food hunt. He was carrying nothing in his paws, which could only mean that he hadn't managed to collect any food.

Now things were getting *really* desperate. Hago had noticed that his brother was retrieving less and less food as the days went by, and now he hadn't brought anything for them to consume. Either the food had run out – which was unlikely, considering there was enough meat in the Pride Lands to feed about *five* prides – or the King had increased the security for the second time in two months, preventing Bora from gaining access to any food.

Hago knew which outcome he would choose, because he knew he would be one hundred per cent correct. "I take it you have no food?" he asked, earning a nod from his older sibling.

"Yep," replied Bora, a worried – and hungry – look on his face. He looked starving, and he had good reason to be, too. Over the course of the previous few days, they only had a tiny amount of food to share between the two of them, and it simply wasn't enough. They were both hungry, tired, and very, *very* irritable. "The entire pride is guarding every scrap of food they have. The King's made it nearly impossible to even get *into* the Pride Lands, never mind getting some food from out of there."

Hago scowled, and then he growled. Getting food from the Pride Lands was now more or less *impossible*. If something wasn't done quickly, then Hago and Bora were going to starve to death.

"We're going to have to move somewhere else," Bora told Hago.

"We're not moving anywhere," Hago said, determined. They weren't going anywhere. Not while he had a say in it.

"Huh?" exclaimed Bora, taken slightly aback by this. "You're kidding, right? Hago, if we stay here then we'll both *die*. We've gotta go somewhere else!"

Hago ignored Bora, as his mind pondered on whether to spend ages thinking of another plan that would most likely fail, or using a plan he'd been saving as a backup for quite some time now. The plan that he would use when all things went wrong, when there was no other option available to him. Today seemed like a good day to put that backup plan into action. It was a cruel, vicious, unrelenting plan. A plan that... Well, just wasn't very pleasant.

"Like I said, Bora – we're not going anywhere," Hago said as an evil smile cruelly spread across his face. If anyone was there to witness that cruel smile, then they would feel a sudden cold shiver trickling down their spine. It was so filled with evil and villainy that it was actually scary. "I've got... an idea. An idea which I've been saving for a very long time, and an idea I want to use on this very day."

Bora's eyes widened in horror. "Oh, no. Not—"

"No, not that," Hago interrupted. "Worse."

Bora gasped in horror. "Not...?"

Hago shook his head. "No. Not that one. Even *worse*."

Bora let out a loud, horrified scream, and Hago's cruel smile turned into a wide grin which only seemed even scarier. "Yes, Bora. *That* one."

"But, but that's just evil!" Bora exclaimed. "That's diabolical! It's... It's too cruel for words! It's *eviller* than evil!"

Hago's grin only seemed to widen. "I know," he agreed. "That's why it's so brilliant."

Nala studied her reflection in the water hole, thinking to herself. Her mind was, of course, on her best friend, Simba. She was thinking of doing something she thought rather brave today.

I'm gonna tell him, she told herself, trying to sound as determined as she possibly could. She wanted to do this. She had held this secret in for too long, and it was about time it came out. *It can't be that hard! "Simba, I have a huge crush on you, and you're the cutest, most adorable cub I've ever seen in my life!" Is that so hard? No, it's not. You're strong! You can do this! And if he rejects you, then you'll just stand there and take it, before becoming a... lonely... heartbroken... wreck.*

Nala sighed sadly. It was the fear of the unknown that always got her in the end. It always managed to rip her confidence right out of her body. The fear of the unknown truly was the greatest fear of all. For all she knew, Simba was just being really friendly to her, and never once thought of her in a romantic way. There really was no way of telling. Nala couldn't read minds, and she wouldn't want to, even if it resulted in her being gloriously happy for the rest of her life. She'd rather have the surprise, thank you very much.

You could always look on the bright side, she suggested to herself. *After all, for all you know Simba could think you're the most beautiful cub in the world. He sounds so caring when he talks to you, right? "I'll always take care of you." Ooh, don't you just melt when he says that?*

Nala giggled. Talking to yourself could be rather funny. It could also be ridiculous, and sometimes, in certain cases, be both funny *and* ridiculous. She thought there was nothing wrong in discussing her personal matters with herself. After all, wasn't that the point? You could only discuss something with someone else, and to Nala, discussing her personal matters with herself sounded perfectly okay to her.

After all, who else was there? There was only Simba, and this was the one personal matter that she *couldn't* discuss with him. Not unless he suddenly bounded over to her, gave her that lovely grin of his and proclaimed his love to her.

That would be a bit too fast for her, though. She always dreamed of herself and Simba watching the sunset together, snuggled up close to each other before Simba told her that he had a big crush on her. That would be just *perfect* for her...

"Either you're a big fan of the water, or you're thinking really hard," said a voice Nala adored from behind her.

She grinned, and turned around to see Simba casually lying on his back on a large rock, his tail swishing lazily from side to side. He was looking up at the bright blue sky, a smile on his face.

She hopped over to him, elated to see him. Every time she saw Simba just put this big smile on her face. Words couldn't really sum up the strong feelings she had for him. "Simba!" she exclaimed happily. "I was beginning to think you weren't gonna show up."

Turning his head to her, he grinned. "I'll *a*lways show up," he told her, causing her heart to skip a beat. He rolled over on the rock, that all too familiar glint of mischief evident in his eyes. "Where do you want to go today?"

Nala shared the same glint of mischief, ready for their next adventure together. "Let's go find somewhere we've *never* been before. Somewhere exciting!"

Simba put a paw to his chin, thinking to himself for a few seconds. "I might have just the place," he told her. "There's this dark cave in the Outlands I saw once. It looked like it went on for ever, but I never went in." He laughed. "But you don't want to go in there. After all, it is a little scary, and dangerous."

"Danger? I laugh in the face of danger!"

"Hey! That's *my* line!"

AN: What's this so-called 'backup' plan that Hago has? Whatever it is, you know it's not gonna involve anything happy. Plus, it seems our two favourite cubs are getting closer and closer to telling each other how they feel. Cuteness to the max! I need to get that on a T-shirt...

Chapter 3: Chapter 3: Determination of the Strong

AN: The waiting sucks, doesn't it? Well, here's your reward for your troubles. More chapters, yeah!

Chapter Three: Determination of the Strong

Hago rose to his paws, a determined look on his face. There was nothing else left for him now. All he had was this one little plan stored in the back of his brain. A plan he hoped – and a deep down part of him *knew* – would succeed. If anyone were to hear Hago's plan, then they would be appalled, disgusted and outraged, and they would turn away in shame.

Hago didn't think it was appalling, disgusting or outraging in any way. However, this was because he cared about one person, and one person only – himself. No one else mattered, and no one else was important. If people had to die if it meant he would live a better life, then so be it. They were irrelevant, and if they weren't strong enough to defend themselves then death was what they deserved, in Hago's opinion. They were all useless, pathetic weaklings. He was the supreme being.

Years of failure, pain and suffering had hardened him to the core of his very being. His previous failure was the final straw. The previous day, Hago had discovered another power contained within his mystical staff – the power of hypnosis. Using this power, Hago decided to hypnotise King Mufasa, and then tried to enslave the whole kingdom. However, his greatest enemies, Simba and Nala, had managed to foil his plan for total domination of the Pride Lands. Luckily – for Hago, at least – he had managed to escape, barely saving his life in the process. It was the last time he wanted to experience failure like that, and he promised to himself that his next plan would be the most ruthless, evillest, cruellest plan he could muster up. That just happened to be the backup plan he'd had stored in his mind for quite some time.

"Why do I get the feeling you want to put that plan into action now?" asked Bora, a nervous look on his face. Even for him, Hago's plan was rather harsh, and it wasn't something he particularly wanted to be part of. It was just *too* evil, and that really was saying something, considering Bora spent most of his time chasing after his younger brother, who did nothing but plot evil scheme after evil scheme day in, day out.

"Of course I want to do it now," replied Hago, looking sternly at his older sibling. He *had* to do this now. There was going to be no stopping him, because there was no other option.

Bora looked down at the ground sheepishly, averting his brother's cold stare. "Oh... okay."

A big part of him feared Hago today. He was at his evillest, and that made it dangerous for anyone and everyone. This had to be the worst Bora had ever seen Hago. The pure, seething hatred in his eyes just terrified Bora on the inside. It wasn't right.

Bora took a deep breath, trying his best not to let Hago hear it, and then decided to bravely ask a question which could mean his untimely death if he wasn't too careful. Hago was *that* volatile today. "Don't you think you should, uh, take a rest for today or something?"

Hago just laughed off Bora's question, something Bora didn't quite expect. He expected more of an angry rant from Hago, rather than a simple laugh. Not only did Hago seem rather volatile at this moment in time, but he also seemed quite surprising...

"Take a rest, you say?" said Hago with another laugh. "I don't need to rest. Resting has gotten me nowhere. I'm tired of resting, which sounds rather funny, actually – if you think about it. All we should be focusing on now is the plan, and *nothing* more. Have you got that? We have to be prepared for the worst possible outcome, because things... are gonna get *nasty*."

Hago then started walking, and showed no signs of stopping. The raw determination emanating from his face made it look like he could walk for miles and miles without so much as a single stop to catch his breath. He wanted to win.

He *needed* to win.

"Where are you going?" Bora asked, bounding after him.

"I need to visit an old acquaintance of mine," Hago replied as he kept on walking. For his plan to work, he required the help of a specific individual. One with the amount of hate and anger that would match his own, and Hago knew *just* the person.

It wouldn't take too long to find him, because Hago knew where this person currently resided. The journey would be short and simple.

"What 'old acquaintance'?" said Bora, not really sure who Hago was talking about.

Hago just grinned in response. "Who do you think? Who is the only other individual who is obsessed with taking over the Pride Lands?"

"Oh..." Bora said, nodding as he began to understand who Hago was talking about. "You mean that... Wait, what was his name?"

"Scar," Hago answered. "He has a certain... lust for the Pride Lands which I feel I can exploit. He's probably feeling exactly the same as I am, if not worse. He should be easy to recruit."

Unbeknownst to Hago and Bora, someone was listening in on their discussion from behind a large rock. It obscured the person from view, allowing him to spy on the two villains while they discussed their evil plot.

"Whoa..." breathed Moto, as he continued to listen.

He hadn't even come looking for trouble – he just happened to overhear the two of them talking while he cut through the Outlands to get into the Pride Lands. After a while, Moto simply couldn't stop listening. Hago and Bora had caught his attention, all right, and Moto wanted to hear it all.

As Hago and Bora got further and further away from Moto, he realised he would have to follow them if he wanted to know what they were up to.

The cub shrugged. "Ah well, I got nothing else to do."

Moto hopped over the large rock, and slowly continued after Hago and Bora, trying to be as quiet as he possibly could. Those two were up to something, and Moto was determined to find out what that something was.

Simba grinned at Nala as they stood outside the dark, bleak opening to the cave. "Well, here it is!" he exclaimed, gesturing to the wide entrance of the cave.

Nala peered into the blackness, but she couldn't see anything. It was way too dark, and all Nala could gather from her observation was that the cave seemed to go on for ever and ever. That only seemed to raise even *more* questions about what was contained within the cave. It could be *anything*...

"What do you think is in there?" Nala asked Simba as she turned to him, looking quite eager to get into the cave and start exploring. She loved doing things like this, *especially* when she was with Simba.

Simba shrugged. "Who knows? It could be *anything*!" With that, he ran quickly into the darkness of the cave, blocking Nala from seeing him almost immediately.

She was taken by surprise a little. "Wait for me!" she cried, before following after him.

Today was going to turn out to be most interesting for them.

***Chapter 4*: Chapter 4: Inside the Psycho's Mind**

Chapter Four: Inside the Psycho's Mind

The cave was dark, dusty and, to be honest, quite depressing. Simba and Nala pondered on what the use of such a miserable place could possibly be? What use would anyone have for a bleak, morbid old...

"Oh..." Simba said as he spotted a sudden source of light in the cave. Everything else prior to this had just been blackness. Blackness that seemed to want to swallow the two cubs up and trap them there for ever.

A thin beam of light shone down from above, illuminating an entire circular part of the cave, and that area only. The cave had been very cleverly designed that way, so no one could possibly see what was inside from the outside. They would have to be brave and clever enough to conclude that you would have to enter the cave to find out what was contained within it.

Luckily for Simba and Nala, they were both brave *and* clever. A dark, old, musty cave? It was nothing compared to the other dangers they had faced! This was just as easy as breathing!

Simba walked into the illuminated area, with Nala stood right behind him, looking around cautiously to make sure there weren't any sudden traps, or creatures ready to lunge out at them.

"Told ya this place was cool," he said as he looked upwards, seeing how this clever source of light had come to be. Someone had made a medium-sized hole in the cave ceiling, allowing a wide beam of light to shine down and illuminate the small circular area. This had been planned – by an evil mastermind, no doubt.

"Uh, Simba?" said Nala, a worried look crossing her face. "I'm gonna have to disagree with you on that."

Simba turned around, his eyes narrowed. "Huh?"

Nala was pointing at the cave wall, her eyes widened. Simba found himself having the same reaction as her when he saw what had been crudely scrawled on the cave wall.

Drawings. Lots and lots of drawings. However, these weren't any normal drawings. These were the drawings of a psychotic murderer. One who liked to bring his depraved, sadistic fantasies to life through the medium of art. They had just been scraped into the wall without any care or consideration.

Simba stumbled over to Nala's side, looking visibly shocked by the drawings on the cave wall.

They depicted horrible things, all of which involved Simba and Nala in some way. There were drawings of them being fed to hyenas in accurate gory detail; drawings of them being tossed off of a tall cliff and landing on some extremely sharp rocks below; and there were drawings of them being choked to death until their heads exploded.

That one was *particularly* disturbing to look at.

Nala's voice almost got caught in her throat as she stared at the sickening drawings on the cave wall. They made her want to gag and retch. They were just awful. "These are just... horrible," she finally managed to say. "Who would do such a thing?"

Simba turned his head to Nala. "I guess... I guess it was my Uncle Scar."

"Why?" Nala asked. She knew Scar was evil, but this was just *obsessively* evil. Was he really that hell-bent on killing the two of them?

"He hates us a lot," was the most suitable answer Simba could come up with right now.

"That would explain it," she said with a nervous laugh, looking away from the horrible drawings. She didn't want to look at them anymore. They were just too appalling. Sometimes the amount of evil in the world scared her. Sometimes it felt like evil just outweighed good...

Simba quickly turned away, looking far more interested at the wall on the opposite side. There was nothing on the opposite wall, but after seeing those drawings, *anything* looked appealing to him.

Simba quickly glanced around the illuminated circular area, and realised there was absolutely nothing else in the cave. It was just those horrible, sadistic drawings. That was the only purpose of this cave? To provide a historic insight into the mind of a psycho? It made Simba want to get out of there, as fast as he possibly could. This was one adventure he didn't

particularly want to have.

Simba hopped to Nala's side, and put a soft paw on her shoulder, causing her to stare into his auburn eyes. "You ready to go?" he asked, smiling.

Nala smiled back, because she just couldn't help herself. "*Definitely*," she replied.

With that, the two of them made their way back into the darkness, which now seemed strangely comforting to them, especially after seeing the horrors in the lit area. Wasn't light supposed to be a signal for good, and not the other way around? In the Outlands, everything just seemed weird and creepy, even *with* Scar no longer around.

"Simba?"

"Yeah?"

"Can we just stay by the water hole for today? Those... drawings, they... kinda freaked me out, if you know what I mean."

Simba smiled at her in the darkness. "If that's what you want. They kinda scared me a little too."

"They did?" exclaimed Nala, surprised. Her Simba wasn't quick to admit when he was afraid of something or someone else. She always thought he was very brave...

"Yeah!" Simba replied, grinning. He liked it when he had someone to share his fears with. It was strangely comforting, like when he first opened up to Zazu, telling him that he had a crush on Nala. Zazu now never let him hear the end of it, and it was a secret Simba regretted ever telling him.

Simba continued to watch Nala as they continued walking through the blackness, and decided to ask her something he'd wanted to ask her since he first spotted her at the water hole this morning.

"Nala, uh... Do you want to... watch the sunset with me later today?" he asked shyly, nervousness trapping him like an iron cage.

Nala shot him a shocked look, which Simba of course couldn't see in the darkness. Simba was asking her if she wanted to watch the sunset? Well, he didn't usually ask, so what was so special about tonight?

Maybe he likes you, her mind suddenly thought, before she mentally slapped herself. *No! Stop talking crazy! He's just being friendly!*

"Okay."

This made Simba's heart race. She said yes! She actually *agreed*! In his mind, Simba breathed a deep sigh of relief.

Well, there's that part out of the way, he thought. *Now all I gotta do is snuggle up with her and tell her the big secret. One part down, two to go. Come on, you can do it!*

Simba had a few hours to prepare for this evening. First of all, just what he was going to say? Would he have to be really romantic? Laid-back? Or should he just be himself?

Just being himself sounded pretty good to him. After all, it was what he was best at.

AN: Surprised to see Moto back? I guess I have a soft spot for him, huh?

Chapter 5: Chapter 5: Hago's Proposal

AN: Only three more chapters left to go now. Here are two of them.

Chapter Five: Hago's Proposal

"Scar, you're not gonna like this," Shenzi informed her 'esteemed leader', Scar, as she approached him.

Most of his days were now spent lying on a large rock, far too bored to try and attempt anything. He was entirely out of ideas, and this was becoming quite a serious problem. The Pride Lands was always calling to him, telling him that the kingdom was rightfully his, and he should take his place as King.

Maybe that was just the insanity. Scar didn't think of himself as insane, but everyone else did. They were right. He was a psychopath who would do anything – *anything* – to ensure the kingdom was his. He always seemed so classy and proper, but on the inside he was a maniac. Nothing could change that. His heart – if he even had one, and sometimes people actually wondered – was filled with nothing but hate.

Right now, Scar would do *anything* if it meant he could get his paws on the kingdom. *Anything*. Things were getting seriously desperate, and he could tell his hyena slaves were getting rather restless. They hadn't quite adjusted to jungle life, and were eager to try and attempt some kind of plan, even if it didn't work.

Scar slowly turned his head to Shenzi. What did she want now? Stupid hyenas... they were always bothering him in some way or other. Sometimes he just wanted to be left alone!

"I'm not going to like what?" he asked, his face showing no signs of interest at all. He didn't know what she was going to tell him, and he didn't particularly care.

"That guy you didn't want around here is... Well, here," she replied, flashing him a wide grin. "You know, 'Cuckoo Magic Dude'?"

Scar rose to his paws. *Now* he was interested. If Hago was here, then that meant he had something to offer. Hago wasn't the type of person who would visit Scar just to try and kill him, or something like that. The magical fiend much rather preferred to deal with his own affairs, and that was fine by Scar. The more they kept out of each other's way the better.

That was how it usually went. But since Scar would do *anything* to secure the Pride Lands, he didn't exactly mind working with Hago right now. In fact, it sounded rather appealing to him.

"Where is he?" Scar demanded, grabbing Shenzi by the throat. He liked doing that a lot. It made him feel so much more... better than them.

"Right behind you," said Hago, causing Scar to release Shenzi from his grip and quickly turn around.

Hago had a smile on his face, while he stood next to his companion – his older brother, Bora. Scar always thought it quite odd that the younger brother ordered the older one around; in Scar's family, it was quite the opposite.

"It's a pleasure to see you again, Scar," Hago told him, taking a step closer. "And this time I'm not lying."

"I'm surprised you made it this far," Scar admitted.

Hago nodded in agreement. "Yes, it was quite hard to get past the hordes of hungry hyenas you have around here, but I managed it." He wagged his magical staff around. "This staff of mine has a few helpful features, as you already know."

The frown on Scar's face twisted into a smile. "What are you here for? Not for an assassination attempt, I hope?"

Hago laughed at that thought. "Oh, dear, no. I wouldn't waste my time doing something so worthless and, let's be honest, quite petty. I've brought myself here because I need you, Scar. I *want* you."

"I'm afraid I don't quite 'swing that way', as they say."

Hago shook his head. "No, no. You misunderstand me." He gagged for a second, the thought of doing something even the least bit romantic with Scar making him physically ill. "I want you and your hyenas to join forces with me."

Scar gave him a challenging look. "And just why would I do such a thing? Especially with *you*. You've caused me a lot of

trouble."

Hago smiled. "Well, I was thinking we could just start afresh. A clean slate, if you get what I mean. You see, in my own efforts I've failed time and time again to take over the Pride Lands. I'm simply outnumbered. That's why I was thinking we should team up."

"Yes." Scar nodded, pretending to sound enthusiastic about the idea. "Where did that get us last time? Oh, yeah... *it got me exiled to this filthy, infested jungle!*"

"This time it will be different," Hago informed him, causing Scar to look the tiniest bit interested, and this time he wasn't faking it.

"How do you mean?"

"Well..." Hago chuckled. "It's quite a nasty, ruthless idea, if I do say so myself. But I'm quite confident that it will end all of our troubles once and for all."

"I'm listening," Scar told him, a grin spreading across his face. If there was one thing Scar admired about Hago, then it was the similarities. They thought along the same evil lines. "What is your brilliant plan?"

"We stage an assault on Pride Rock," Hago revealed, causing a little gasp of surprise from Shenzi.

"What?" mumbled Banzai – who was nearby – as he chewed on some bugs he had in his mouth. He had acquired quite a taste for them during his time in the jungle. Slimy goodness. Yum, yum.

"You heard me all," continued Hago. "We're all going to march right up to Pride Rock, and demand that the King give us the kingdom. If all of us go, then the pride will be outnumbered."

"And what if the King declines?" Scar wondered. "Because that's a certainty, you know."

"Then we start getting nasty," he answered, as a malicious, frightening grin spread across his face. "We start with the threats. Grab a few cubs, hold our claws to their throats."

"And if they continue to decline...?" said Scar, motioning for Hago to continue.

Hago's grin only seemed to widen, like he was looking forward to that outcome. "Then we..." Hago slowly put a paw to his throat, and made a slashing sound with his mouth.

That said it all for Scar, who looked simply fascinated. "Okay. So we show no mercy," Scar concluded, causing Hago to nod in reply.

"That's what I'm saying. We show no compassion at all. We kill whoever we need to until they give in to our demands. We'll be unstoppable. Just think of it, Scar. We'll be a mighty army marching into war. We will be victorious!"

"Then I will gladly join forces with you, Hago." Scar shook Hago's paw gladly, because this was a plan that Scar saw potential in.

Show no mercy. It sounded... *exquisite*.

Chapter 6: Chapter 6: Now or Never

Chapter Six: Now or Never

Hago smiled, pleased that Scar had finally seen sense and had decided to join forces with him. It had gone a lot more smoothly than he expected – after their last encounter, Hago thought Scar wouldn't be quite as co-operative. Luckily, Hago had picked the perfect time to ask him. Scar was at his lowest, and was willing to try anything, and that included teaming up with Hago, someone who he was particularly reluctant to work with.

Hago peeked up at the sky. It was barely visible, thanks to the enormous trees and branches in the enormous jungle they were in. For Hago, beauty always seemed to obstruct everything. He could just about see the sky, and was able to deduce what time of day it was.

"Late afternoon," said Hago with a smile. "I've been out longer than I expected. There'll be an excellent sunset this evening. Sounds like the perfect time to attack."

"Today?" exclaimed Scar, his eyes widened. "That's a bit soon, isn't it?"

Hago laughed that off. "Nonsense! Why would you want to spend another night in this dismal place? Wouldn't you rather go to sleep at Pride Rock, safe in the knowledge that you're the new King? Think about it, Scar. By tonight, you could be King. Doesn't that sound at all appealing?"

"What makes you so eager?" Scar asked. "We still need to discuss a few... matters regarding our takeover."

"Matters?" repeated Hago, raising an eyebrow. "What matters, exactly?"

"Well, you see, when we take over the kingdom one of us has to become the King, and we need to determine *who*," replied Scar with a smile on his face.

"I thought about that quite some time ago, Scar," Hago informed him. "We'll both become King."

Scar narrowed his eyes. "And just how is that supposed to work?"

Hago closed his eyes and put a paw to his face, sighing. Did he really need to explain something as simple as this? Well, in Scar's case, yes. "Haven't you ever heard of a joint leadership? We'll *share* the kingdom. I know that's not a word you like very much, but it's something you're going to have to put up with if you stand a chance of taking over the kingdom you lust for so much."

Scar seemed to consider it for a moment, but scowled when he realised that Hago was right. It was this or nothing. He *had* to do this if he stood any chance of securing the Pride Lands for himself. "Fine," he reluctantly agreed. "We'll..." He gagged for a second, because he was about to use a word he despised greatly. "*Share* the kingdom."

Hago smiled in response. He had no problems with sharing the kingdom – it seemed fair enough. The Pride Lands were huge, so there was plenty to go round. A joint leadership sounded pretty good to him. "I knew you'd see it my way," he told Scar. "I mean, what other options do you have? This is our only chance."

"And you want to strike tonight?" asked Scar.

Hago nodded. "Precisely. They'll never see this coming. We'll have the pride completely outnumbered."

"There is just one more thing I need to ask you."

"Fire ahead."

"What if the pride put up a fight?" Scar asked, knowing this was a very likely outcome. "They're a very feisty bunch, you know. They're almost *certainly* going to try and defend themselves."

Hago laughed evilly, as if that was a good thing. "I have a certain way of making them obedient," he replied as he stroked his staff up and down. "As I said before, my staff contains a great deal of magic powers."

"And one of these powers is making the pride obedient?" Scar presumed.

"Have you not heard of hypnotism, Scar?" Hago asked, sounding genuinely interested. "It's a wonderful thing. We'll have a loyal pride who will never argue, never defend themselves, and never say no." Hago grinned widely. "Doesn't that sound just... *perfect*?"

Moto had been watching this all from behind a wide tree, shocked and appalled by what he was hearing. Things were going to escalate to seriously threatening levels if something wasn't done about it soon.

I... I have to tell someone, Moto thought, his eyes widened in shock. *They're going to take over the whole pride if I don't warn them.*

Moto turned to make a run for it, when someone grabbed him and violently threw him to the ground. He had to wait a few seconds for his eyes to adjust when he saw Hago and Scar looking down on him, unimpressed looks on both their faces.

"And just what are *you* doing here?" Hago demanded.

Moto shuffled backwards a bit before he replied, "N-nothing. I was j-just... Uh..."

"If I didn't know any better then I'd say he was spying on us," said Hago to Scar. "What do you think?"

"I think he *was* spying on us," Scar answered, a menacing grin forming on his face. He delighted in frightening people who were smaller than him, and this especially included young cubs. Scar tutted and shook his head. "We just can't have that, can we?"

Hago nodded, sharing the same threatening grin. "We certainly can't, Scar. I suppose we'll just have to... *deal* with the cub in the correct way."

"You mean slowly tearing his throat out?" Scar presumed.

"Exactly."

Moto let out a little squeal. *Oh, no!* he cried in his mind. *What am I gonna do now? They're gonna kill me!* He took a deep breath, desperately trying to calm himself down. *Now, come on, Moto. They may be bigger than you, but you can still beat them! They're just big, old bullies!*

Scar picked up Moto by the scruff of the neck, ready to do whatever was necessary to silence the cub. "Should I do it quickly... or *slowly*?" he asked his new partner.

"Oh, slowly, definitely," Hago replied, grinning madly.

Moto took a brave chance, and valiantly slashed the paw Scar had him held by. Scar cried out in pain and dropped Moto. The cub took this as his chance to make a speedy exit, and bolted past Hago and the hyenas, heading for the one place he knew he needed to go.

I have to get into the Pride Lands, he thought as he ran. *If I don't warn them about what those two are up to, then they're all done for!*

"That looked like it hurt," Hago observed as he watched Scar rub the wound on his paw that Moto had left him with.

"Oh, really?" growled Scar angrily. "I never would have guessed!"

Hago looked around the area. "Bora, where are you? Bora?"

"I never knew how delicious these things were!" exclaimed Bora.

Hago turned his head to find Bora sitting with Banzai, as they ate some insects together. Bora seemed to be enjoying them almost as much as Banzai was.

"What are you doing?" Hago asked his brother.

"Eating bugs," came the reply from Bora. "I never knew how tasty they were!"

"We're supposed to be working on taking over the Pride Lands, not eating!" Hago roared. "You can eat all the food you like when our job is done!"

Bora rolled his eyes and swallowed what was left of his meal. "Fine," he grumbled, getting to his paws. "Where do we go from here, O Masterful One?"

"At sundown we converge on Pride Rock, and demand that the King hands over the kingdom to us. We will show them no mercy whatsoever. It's either take over the Pride Lands, or die trying."

Bora gulped. "Taking over sounds good to me."

"So why did you ask me?" Nala asked Simba, a curious look on her face.

They were down by the water hole. After their disturbing incident in that cave in the Outlands, they had decided that sticking to the water hole would be a lot safer. Simba didn't want to put Nala in any kind of danger, and *especially* not today. Today could very well be the most important day of his life, and he needed everything to go perfectly.

Simba turned his head to Nala. "Ask you what?"

She giggled. "You know, when you asked me if I wanted to watch the sunset with you?"

Simba nodded, understanding her now. "Oh, yeah. Well, no reason, really. I just thought it would be kinda nice for us to do together. You know, as best friends."

Nala shyly looked away from Simba, pretending to be more interested in the ground. "You don't have anything... special to say, then?"

He smiled at her. "Not really," he lied. He wanted to keep everything a secret until this evening. That would make it a lot more special for him. He wanted to keep Nala guessing. He couldn't wait to see the look of surprise on her face when he finally let his deep secret out!

He glanced up at the sky. Evening wasn't more than half an hour away. He gulped nervously, and looked at Nala. She was staring down at the ground, a shy smile on her face.

It was now or never.

AN: Ooh, only one more day to go until the end of the series! Bet you can't wait, huh? See you tomorrow!

Chapter 7: Chapter 7: The Sunset

AN: Well, this is it. Here is the nail-biting climax to the series!

Chapter Seven: The Sunset

Simba and Nala were slowly making their way towards Pride Rock. Simba had told Nala that Pride Rock was the best place to watch the sunset from, and he was indeed correct. It showcased a view of the entire kingdom, and the view was truly, truly beautiful.

"It really is a beautiful day," said Nala as they walked along, taking in all of her surroundings.

Not as beautiful as you, Simba thought with a smile as he watched Nala. For the past five minutes he just couldn't stop thinking about her, and what he was about to do.

This was it. The big moment. He was going to admit to Nala that he had a crush on her. Would she return his feelings? Maybe she would, maybe she wouldn't. But Simba just couldn't hold it in for any longer. She had to know, Simba wanted her to know and she *deserved* to know!

"So... looking forward to the sunset?" Simba asked, trying to strike up a conversation in preparation for the event that would follow.

Nala looked at him and smiled. "Of course I am, Simba. I think the sunset is one of the most beautiful things in the world."

Well, there's a start, he thought nervously, his heart thumping in his chest. He hadn't even started yet and *already* he was beginning to feel scared and shaky. He was doing his best to hide all the fear, and for the most part he was succeeding. Nala was unaware of his nervousness, or for that matter, what he was going to tell her.

He just hoped this all wasn't going to end in tears for him.

Moto ran and ran, speeding through the Outlands as fast as his legs could carry him. He looked behind, and saw that no one was following him. The entire place was deserted.

But that didn't mean he was going to stop. He felt it was his duty to warn the pride about the impending danger. Maybe they could mount some kind of defence against Scar, Hago and the hyenas?

Come on, you're nearly there! he urged, forcing himself to go a little faster. His muscles ached and his heart was pounding. Every part of his body was screaming for him to take a rest, but he couldn't. He had to warn the pride before it was too late.

It would save a great deal of lives.

Simba found it really hard to stop himself shaking nervously as he sat with Nala on the edge of Pride Rock, watching the sunset together.

Nala looked entranced by it. One of her most favourite things to look at – aside from Simba, of course – was the sunset. It was a truly amazing sight to her.

Simba found himself staring at Nala, his mind willing for him to spill his secret out to her. However, his body held him back. The moment needed to be perfect. There was still something he needed to do before he told Nala.

Just get close to her, he told himself. *That's all you have to do. You can do this!*

Simba scooted closer to Nala's side, his fur almost touching hers. One more little movement and he would be snuggling up to her. After that, all that was necessary was to tell Nala that he had a crush on her. He hoped that she would return his feelings and they would enter a relationship together. Simple, right?

Of course, it could all go horribly wrong. Nala could end up hating him for it and would never want to speak to him ever again. That would be the worst possible outcome, but deep down Simba had this feeling that such a thing wouldn't happen. After all, she seemed to adore everything about him!

Simba took a deep breath. *Here goes nothing*, he thought as he scooted even closer to Nala. *Now* their fur was touching, and any onlookers would find the sight very cute and romantic.

Nala was quite shocked by this movement, and turned her head to look at Simba. *What is Simba doing?* she wondered, as their eyes connected.

"Simba?" she said. "What are you doing?"

Simba smiled. This was it. No holding back. "Nala, I—"

"Simba! Nala!" a voice called urgently. "I've been looking for you everywhere!"

Simba and Nala turned their heads in the direction of the voice, and saw that it was Moto. He had an urgent look on his face, and was speeding towards them. He skidded to a halt in front of the two cubs, breathing heavily.

"Moto?" Simba and Nala both exclaimed at the same time, surprised to see him.

He managed a smile. "That's me."

"What are you doing here?" Nala asked, concerned.

Moto looked up at her, and couldn't help but smile dreamily. Even though he knew he had no chance with her, he still harboured a deep crush for her. He couldn't help himself – she was just so beautiful!

Not too long ago, Moto had made a deal with Hago. The magical lion made Moto irresistible, in return for Prince Simba at a later time. Moto had successfully managed to win her over, and this made Simba extremely jealous, because he too had a crush on Nala.

However, Moto's secret was revealed when he failed to give Simba to Hago, and his powers were immediately revoked. He realised that what he did was wrong, and apologised to Simba and Nala for the trouble he caused. He left on good terms with them, and he was thankful for that.

"Well, I was gonna come visit you," Moto explained quickly. "But then I overheard that Hago guy talking. He said he had some great, big plan, so then he went and found someone called Scar, who has a *huge* army of hyenas! They're working together to take over the Pride Lands, and they're going to attack Pride Rock *now*!"

"An *excellent* explanation," said a sinister voice from behind the three cubs.

They turned around to see Scar, Hago, Bora, Shenzi, Banzai, Ed and a massive army of hyenas, all assembled at Pride Rock. The huge number of them was both overwhelming and frightening at the same time.

Nala gasped, her eyes widened in shock and horror. "No way..."

"What is going on?" demanded a deep voice.

Mufasa, Sarabi and the rest of the pride had left the den at Pride Rock to see what all the sudden commotion was. When they saw Scar and Hago – along with their huge, threatening army – some of them gasped, and others murmured amongst themselves. This was a most unexpected thing.

"My dear brother," said Scar to Mufasa. "It's been quite a while, I must say."

"What are you doing here, Scar?" Mufasa asked, feeling rage boiling inside of him. Just the sight of Scar made the King furious. He had trusted Scar, and how did he repay him? By plotting and scheming to kill him. Some brother he turned out to be.

"I'm here to demand that you give us the kingdom," Scar replied simply, showing no signs of anger as of yet.

"Never," Mufasa stated. There was no negotiation to be had here. Scar was never getting his greedy paws on the Pride Lands. *Never*.

Hago rolled his eyes. "Now how did I know he was going to say that?" He closed his eyes and shook his head, joining Scar by his side. "I'm afraid that if you *don't* step down then we shall have to use more... forceful methods of securing the Pride Lands for ourselves."

"Is that a threat?" asked Mufasa.

"Yes," replied Hago with an evil grin.

"Simba," Nala whispered as they watched events unfold before their eyes. "What are we gonna do?"

Simba looked Nala in the eyes. "I don't know," he answered truthfully. He had no idea what they were going to do. They were simply outnumbered.

"Maybe I can do something," Moto said bravely, taking a step towards Scar and Hago.

"Moto, don't!" Nala cried after him, but it was too late. Moto was determined to try and stand up to these monsters. Somebody had to.

"You're not taking over this kingdom," Moto told the two villains firmly.

Scar scoffed. "And what are you going to do about it? You're just a cub."

"So?" Moto retorted. "You're just a pair of big bullies. You're pathetic!"

Scar growled furiously, putting a paw to Moto's throat, his claws almost digging into the cub. Moto didn't look scared – he still looked brave, and rather heroic.

"Watch what you say, you little brat," Scar warned Moto. "Or you might just end up dead."

Moto smiled. "I'd like to see you try."

Scar smiled back. "Okay."

Scar slashed Moto in the throat, causing him to stumble backwards as blood poured from the gaping wound in his neck like a waterfall. He choked desperately for air for a few seconds, before he fell to the ground, a blank expression on his face.

Moto was dead.

The entire pride erupted with panic. Some gasped and others cried out in fear. Nala buried her head in Simba's fur, not wanting to witness any more of this murderous carnage. Suddenly Scar was feared, and he was loving every second of it.

"It seems like I've got the point across," Scar said as he smiled evilly. Just to get his point across, he took a step closer towards Mufasa and the pride, shoving aside Moto's dead corpse as he did so.

"You monster!" Sarabi cried angrily at Scar, feeling nothing but seething hatred for him. He had just killed an innocent cub with no mercy whatsoever. It was a cruel killing, and one of the worst Sarabi had ever witnessed.

"Oh, shut up!" Scar snapped at her, causing her to jump back in fear. "All of you will now surrender or there will be *dire* consequences! Am I understood?"

"You'd better listen to him," Hago suggested, smiling as if there wasn't a care in the world. "He's in a bad mood, as I'm sure you've just witnessed."

"You're telling me," remarked Shenzi.

"You can't do this, Scar!" Mufasa roared, staring at him defiantly. "I won't let you take over this kingdom!"

"You have no say in the matter," Scar told his brother. With an evil grin, he turned to Hago. "Hago, would you please begin your lovely process?"

"Process?" said Sarabi. "What process?"

Hago grinned, gesturing to his staff. "You remember my little hypnosis power? Well, I'm going to use it to make you all obedient, mindless slaves. While I was preparing for this moment I perfected the design of it a little. Instead of forcing you to stare into the staff's eyes, all I have to do is this."

Hago aimed the cobra head of the staff right at Mufasa. Two purple beams shot from the eyes and struck Mufasa's own eyes. His eyes immediately began to glow red. In just a matter of seconds, the King was now in his power.

"Dad!" Simba cried in horror.

"See?" said Hago, his grin widening. He laughed maniacally. "Oh, I haven't had this much fun since the time I killed that pathetic lion a while ago. What was his name, Muerto or something?"

From the front of the crowd, Nala's mother, Sarafina, growled angrily, bearing her sharp teeth. Her mate's murder was the reason she had moved to the Pride Lands in the first place. She never found out who the murderer was. Until now, that is. "You did it!" she accused, pointing at Hago.

Hago looked at her, confused. "Did what?"

"You murdered my mate!" she screamed with tears in her eyes. "You killed Muerto!"

Hago pretended to look surprised. "Did I? Aw, that's a shame. Well, boo hoo. Get over it."

Sarafina pounced at Hago, but he was prepared for this. "I don't think so!" he exclaimed as he expertly aimed his staff at her. The same coloured beams he hit Mufasa with struck Sarabi this time, causing her eyes to glow red instantly. Now she too was under Hago's control.

"Mom!" Nala cried, absolutely horrified.

Hago turned to Nala. "She's your mother?" He laughed. "Oh, this is brilliant! So I killed your father! Oh, isn't that funny?"

Nala could feel tears welling up in her eyes. She never knew her father, but it still made her very upset to hear something like this. She despised Hago even more now, and she thought that was impossible, considering how much she hated him already.

"It's over for you all!" Scar declared, getting closer and closer to the pride. "You've lost! Hago, enslave them all!"

"With pleasure," said Hago, as he aimed his staff at the first lioness he saw.

Simba and Nala could only look on, horrified, as they saw the entire pride enslaved by Hago's hypnotic powers. If the entire pride were now completely obedient to Scar, Hago and everyone else, then that meant there was no chance of them fighting back. Scar would be the ruler of the kingdom for the rest of his life, and there truly was nothing they could do about it.

Simba whispered to Nala in her ear. "Nala, I know this is gonna be hard for you, but you have to listen to me. We need to get out of here."

Nala stared into his eyes. "Okay," she agreed without question. She trusted Simba with her life. There was no one else she could turn to. Simba was all she had left.

"Then on the count of three, we run. As fast as we can. Got it?"

Nala nodded. "Yeah. Okay."

"Okay. One... two... *three!*"

Simba and Nala then ran as fast as they could, darting past Scar and Hago, and past the horde of hyenas. Some of them tried to grab the two cubs, but Simba and Nala managed to just barely evade them.

They sped down Pride Rock, and never looked back. Not once.

After he had hypnotised the entire pride, Hago turned to Scar. "Happy?"

Scar nodded. "Excellent work. Your plan worked, Hago. I'm impressed."

"Now *we're* the new Kings," he said, taking a deep breath. His lifelong goal had finally been completed. The Pride Lands were his.

"Hey, Scar," called Banzai as he looked down on the Pride Lands, watching Simba and Nala disappear into the distance.

"What is it?" Scar asked, following Banzai's gaze.

"What do we do about them, huh?" he asked, pointing down below at the two cubs, who just looked like two fast-moving dots now.

"Let them run," Scar replied, not really caring any more. "They can't do anything. I have an army of hyenas and an

enslaved pride. What chance do they stand of stopping us?"

"Exactly," agreed Hago, joining Scar by his side. He watched as Simba and Nala disappeared forever. "No one can stop us now."

And Hago smiled, because he knew he was right. The Pride Lands were his, and he was going to control each and every thing in the kingdom. His goal had finally been achieved.

He had won.

To Be Continued...

AN: Oh. My. God! What a cliffhanger! Remember when I said I had a soft spot for Moto? Ha ha, I lied! I lied about it all! Ha ha ha! Wow... I'm horrible. Did I fool you? This isn't the end, because stories like these come in two parts. You'll have to wait a few days for the next update. That is when the series will *truly* end. So until next time, Merry Christmas one and all!

NEXT TIME: Can Simba and Nala save the Pride Lands, rescue their families and confess their feelings for each other before time runs out?